

HEADQUARTERS
U.S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURV
Gravelly Point

RESTRICTED

13 March 1946

INTERROGATION NO. 610. USSBS

Place: Singapore
Date: 28 December 1945

Division of Origin: Military Analysis Division.

Subject: JAAF in Southeast Asia.

Personnel Interrogated and background: Lt Col NAITO, Susumu. Chief of Operations Staff 3 Air Army.

PERSONAL DETAILS:

1927 Graduated Army Cadet School

1931 Promoted to 2nd Lt.

1936 Graduated as Pilot

1941 From December 1941 to June 1942 was Instructor at HOKODA Training School.

1942 From October 1942 to June 1944 was in Training Division of Air HQ, Tokyo.

1944 In June came to 3 Air Army.

First: as Chief of Operations Staff 9 Flying Div., Palembang.

Second: From November 1944 Chief of Operations Staff 3 FA, Singapore.

Allied Officers Present:

Maj. E. MacElwain	GSC
Maj. J.J. Driscoll	AC
S/Ldr. E.W. Bloxham	RAF
Capt. C. M. Roberts	AC

NOTE: Most of the subjects covered have been at least partially covered in other interrogation reports; hence with the exception of the interrogation related to KAMIKAZE activities, this report is a summary of what Lt. Col. NAITO stated.

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CALCUTTA ATTACKS:

The objects of such attacks were the severing of the line of communications, the cutting off of supplies from the Burma Front and damaging of Wharf facilities. They were really short of the necessary Long Range Bombers to execute such attacks and the Ground Army Command in the theater thought little could be achieved by such attacks. When Lt. Col. NAITO came to 3 FA he disagreed with this view and wanted to continue the attacks from the point of view of disrupting supplies and communications into Burma. The Ground Army Command, however, thought differently and directed the 3 FA to concentrate on ground support rather than attacks on economic targets such as Calcutta. Since 3 FA was under the Army's control in S.E. Asia, it meant that the decision of the Army had to be accepted. Col. NAITO's predecessors on the 3 FA staff encountered similar objections whenever they suggested bombing Calcutta, or engaging in any operations other than ground support.

HUMP INTERCEPTION:

Lt. Col. NAITO was of the opinion that the Hump route could be cut and that probably an extra 100 aircraft in Burma would do the job. However, when the question was taken up between Tokyo and the Southern Army, the objective was not considered worth while. Again it was a case of the Ground Army's opinion prevailing.

TRAINING:

- a) The priority of pilot allocation naturally varied with the period. For example, in 1943, the order of priority by area was; New Guinea, Philippines, Japan, Southern Areas, China. In 1944, however, China moved up one place in the order.
- b) Such problems as long term development of training and numbers to attend Training Courses, were determined by the War Office and Air H.Q. Requirements of new units were received by the Departmental Training Staff from these two centers.
- c) In 1942 plans were set to obtain 6,000 new pilots in 1943. Actually 3,000 were trained. Plans were set to produce 25,000 personnel in 1944, but he does not know what actual number was procured.
- d) In his view one of the principal reasons why the quality of trained pilots deteriorated was the great increase in the estimate of aircraft production which caused a hurried decision to produce a large number of pilots rather

than a smaller number of more highly qualified personnel. But production never reached the planned peak and there were always more pilots than aircraft.

DEFENSE:

Although carrier attacks on Singapore had been considered unlikely, a plan for air defense of the base had been prepared. When Lt. Col. NAITO arrived in November 1944 he found the SHONAN BOEI SHIREIBU different from that at Palembang in that: a) It was much smaller and weaker. b) It came directly under the Ground Army.

The Navy so far as he could recall, had their largest number of aircraft (20) present in the spring of 1945. But they were used only for defense of the Naval Base in the Seletar area.

Note: This use of Naval aircraft was exactly parallel to their employment in Japan in defense only of Naval Districts.

THAI AIR FORCE:

The Thai Air Force was responsible for the air defense of Bangkok.

KAMIKAZE ATTACKS:

Q. When was the first Army suicide attack in the Third Air Army area?

A. There was an unplanned attack by Gen. Abe's son in October of 1944 against the British carrier *Illustrious*. The first planned attack was that against British ships off Puket (Siam) in June 1945.

Q. Who ordered the suicide attacks in the Southern Area?

A. The suicide units were set up by order of the Southern Army and the details were worked out by the Third Air Army.

Q. What help did you receive in this area from Japan?

A. We received manuals from Japan including instructions on modification of the planes for TOKKOTAI. We never received any suicide planes, however. There were no instructions on pilot training for TOKKO other than that in the manual.

Q. How many pilots from the Third Air Army were sent to Japan for TOKKO units to be used there?

A. In March this year (1945) we sent about 800 pilots to Japan - part of them were well trained and part only newly, and therefore poorly, trained. In June certain flying regiments - the 8th, 50th, 58th, 64th and 81st HIKOSENTAI - were sent back to Japan at the order of Imperial GHQ in Tokyo.

Q. Did this leave you with a surplus of planes or pilots?

A. Pilots.

Q. When the war ended, how many TOKKO aircraft were actually ready to scramble?

A. Between 500 and 600.

Q. How many would have been ready by the time of ZIPPER Operation (1 Sept 45)?

A. We planned to have 800 ready for TOKKO by the first of September.

Q. Did you expect as large a percentage of hits by your suicide attacks as were obtained in the northern areas (Okinawa Campaign)?

A. No; we thought the percentage would be less due to, first, the fact that our attacks were planned for twilight, second, that our planes were not as good as those available in Japan, and, third, that we would have less fighter cover available for our attacks than they did in Japan.

Q. What were your specific plans for employment of that cover?

A. We planned to use the 64th HIKOSENTAI planes to provide cover for TOKKO planes from secret airfields in north Malaya. Four bombers which were in French Indo-China were to move to Takli and Lampang for night attacks against Rangoon airfield. We considered that one of the important Allied staging fields.

Q. Did you have any plans for airborne troops?

A. The Third Air Army proposed to use twin-engine planes to carry shock troops which would be landed on Allied airfields in the Penang area - after you had landed there - in order to destroy your parked aircraft. This would have been an attack similar to that we carried out from Japan against Yontan airfield on Okinawa during that campaign.

Q. What was your basic concept of defense against ZIPPER?

A. The Japanese air forces were entirely committed to the defense of Singapore. If you had succeeded in taking Singapore, it would undoubtedly have resulted in the complete annihilation of the Japanese air forces because we would have thrown in every plane we had.